

THEATER DEATH TOLL 108 WITH LAST WRECKAGE CLEARED AWAY

GRAND JURY VISITS SCENE OF DISASTER; PROBE UNDER WAY

(Continued from First Page.)

was under the roof," the inspector said. "Every Saturday night since the theater opened one of my family has attended the show. It was not until hours later that I learned my daughter was safe."

EVIDENCE TO GRAND JURY.

U. S. District Attorney Peyton Gordon has started to thoroughly investigate the causes. Every feature that may throw light on the matter will be searchingly gone into. Major Gordon said this morning that his course would not be dependent upon the findings of the coroner's jury or of any other agency; that he would present his findings to the grand jury for speedy action and that in his presentment to this body his inquiry and investigations would be as complete as circumstances permit.

The investigation will include a minute examination of the architect's plans; the names of the builders, contractors and subcontractors; the material used in the construction of the building; the price of the material and the different firms which supplied the material; thorough investigation as to the progress of the building while it was under construction, and whether it was properly inspected from time to time; also whether the architects, contractors, builders and subcontractors were properly bonded and were released from their responsibility when the building was handed over to the owners at its completion.

The Morse conspiracy case which has been under investigation by the grand jury for the last week will be temporarily withdrawn from grand jury consideration, should Mr. Gordon find that it interferes even in the least with a prompt dispatch of the Knickerbocker case.

GRAND JURY VISITS SCENE.

When the grand jury arrived at the courthouse this morning the members at once took official notice of the disaster and upon motion of the foreman, Michael McQuaid, they suspended consideration of the Morse case to take up the Knickerbocker case. They decided to make a personal inspection of the scene of the tragedy.

This official inspection and investigation conducted or the spot will be thorough from every point of view and may take some time. Mr. McQuaid, the foreman of the jury, declared that every effort would be made by the grand jury to fix the blame and to do so without delay. The grand jury went alone on its trip to the theater; not attended by deputy marshals as is the custom. They will be protected from outside interference by the military and police on duty at the scene of the disaster.

Never before in the history of the Federal grand jury, with the possible exception of the assassination of President Lincoln at Ford's Theater, has this body been confronted with a greater responsibility and one which involved a greater loss of life.

Every theater that opened last night without permission of the District authorities will be prosecuted. This was the declaration of Commissioner Cuno H. Rudolph today.

"The managers of theaters who opened their places last night without authority ought to be thrown in jail," he said. "A thorough investigation will be begun immediately."

It was said at the District building inspectors' office today that the majority of theaters in the city were of the "truss roof" construction, such as the Knickerbocker.

BLAME STREET CARS.

Residents in the neighborhood of the Knickerbocker Theater say that they believe the technical investigations which will go into the strength of the structure will bring out the fact that if there was a defect in the roof it was brought about by vibrations of the street cars.

Many of them said today that when the street cars pass over the crossing at Eighteenth street and Columbia road the houses in the vicinity vibrate. Both the Capital Traction Company's cars and the Washington Railway and Electric Company's cars pass the theater and there is a cross-over at that junction.

The office of the city building inspector has been charged by Cuno H. Rudolph, president of the board of District Commissioners, with conducting the investigation in behalf of the city. The coroner said that he would not hold the inquest for several days so that the case could be

Among Those Who Were Killed



ELIZABETH JEFFREYS.



DANIEL K. JACKSON.



MISS VIRGINIA B. FERAUD.



MARY LEE FLEMING.



LOUIS W. STRAKER.



ERNEST NATELLO.



MISS HELENA BARCHFIELD.



MRS. CHAS. C. TUCKER.



HOWARD G. KNEESSL.

FOUR THEORIES ADVANCED FOR THEATER CRASH

(Continued from First Page.)

Standards. Residents of the neighborhood state that the passing of street cars over the tracks at Eighteenth street and Columbia road cause an almost constant vibration in the houses. Engineers state that this might be a contributing factor, but would not likely be a determining factor in the weakening of the roof or the collapse of the roof.

Saw Drift on Roof.

It is generally believed that a huge pile of snow which had accumulated near the center of the roof was a major cause of the disaster. One spectator Saturday declared that snow was piled in a mound by a swirling wind to a height of eight feet.

Such a mound would exert a pressure of approximately twenty-five pounds to the square foot. The roofs of all buildings in Washington are required to have a strength capable of resisting an extra pressure of rain or snow of twenty-five pounds to the square foot.

Keller Scouts Theory Snow Caused Tragedy; Thinks Building Weak

Engineer Commissioner Charles Keller today declared he did not believe that the weight of the snow Saturday night was greater than

the extra amount of weight allowed for in the plans of the Knickerbocker Theater.

"The snow, in my opinion, did not weigh more than ten pounds to the square foot," he said. "Our building regulations require that the roof be built to accommodate an extra load of twenty-five pounds to a square foot. For this reason, I cannot believe the snow caused the cave-in. In the event there was a snow drift, I still can't believe the snow caused the cave-in."

"It appears to me that there must have been some weak spot in the construction which caused other points to weaken and resulted in the general collapse."

Commissioner Keller said he had not examined the plans.

Dangerous State of Theater Roof Noted Before Crash

That the accumulation of an eight-foot-high snowdrift near the center of the roof of the Knickerbocker Theater was responsible for the horrifying tragedy, was the opinion expressed by Dr. E. L. Scharf, 2603 Mozart place, today.

"I was snowbound at Eighteenth street and Columbia road about three hours before the roof collapsed," said Dr. Scharf, "and I called another man's attention to the fact that a large conical mound of snow had been formed on the roof by the swirling of the wind."

I believe that the great weight of this pile of snow overstrained the girders of the roof and caused them to buckle and collapse.

"This conical mound I saw must have put a strain of at least 100 pounds per square foot on the roof."

Snow Weight Greater Than Allowed For in Plans, Healy Asserts

John P. Healy, District Inspector of Buildings, today said building regulations require that the roof of every theater be built strong enough to stand a weight of 25 pounds to

the square foot, over and above the total weight of the roof. This extra weight provision is for snow.

Healy said also he had been informed that twenty-six inches of snow, which is the official depth announced by the Weather Bureau, would weigh thirty pounds to the square foot, five pounds in excess of the twenty-five pounds allowed.

Thomas L. Costigan, now assistant superintendent of the street cleaning department, who was the engineer who O. K.'d plans for the Knickerbocker Theater, said:

"I do not remember the plans for this theater. However, I know that on the plans of every theater that I examined I was always positive that the building regulation requiring a provision for twenty-five pounds a square foot extra weight, was complied with before the plans were O. K.'d."

Officials of the building inspector's office said there was no information available as to whether the plans were complied with by those who built the theater.

"We will have to investigate to determine positively whether the theater, when built, was strong enough to accommodate the extra load," Healy said.

Major E. G. Curtis, who was one of the inspectors who made a daily report on the progress of the building of the theater, is dead. A. J. Selden, who, with Curtis, reported the progress, left the District several months ago, and is in Florida.

Engineers Consider Advisability of Having Walls Pulled Down

Engineers in charge of clearing the Knickerbocker Theater ruins are now in consultation to determine advisability of pulling down the

SENATE INVESTIGATION DEMANDED BY CAPPER; CORRUPTION CHARGED

Sweeping investigation of the Knickerbocker tragedy is provided for in a resolution introduced by Senator Capper in the Senate today.

"Whereas, the tragedy at the Knickerbocker Theater last Saturday, resulting in the death of 108 citizens and the serious injury of many others has profoundly shocked the people of Washington and the entire nation; and,

"Whereas, the explanation that snow, although of an extraordinary quantity, was the chief cause of the collapsing of the roof, appears to be unsatisfactory; and,

"Whereas, it is currently reported, that contractors and builders, especially during and since the world war, have ignored, evaded, or treated lightly the rules and regulations provided in the building code of the District of Columbia, especially those sections which made mandatory provisions for assurance against such a terrible calamity as has just occurred; and,

"Whereas, it has been persistently rumored that contractors and builders, determined to save money on the erection of residences and building structures, have acted in collusion with inspectors of buildings employed by the District of Columbia; and,

"Whereas, it is the imperative duty of the Senate to know all the facts relating to this inexcusable tragedy, and also to learn what, if any truth, there is in the repeated assertions that the safety and health of thousands of citizens and residents of the District of Columbia have been jeopardized by the actions of careless contractors, builders, and building inspectors, be it

"Resolved, That the Senate Committee of the District of Columbia be and hereby is authorized and directed to make a sweeping investigation into the Knickerbocker tragedy, including the operations of builders, contractors, and build-

walls, which are weakened and in danger of falling. Capt. C. P. M. Lord, in charge of the police force at the scene of Saturday night's catastrophe, issued orders this morning that nobody was to be allowed to enter the building for fear of further accident.

At noon all except twenty-eight policemen had been withdrawn from duty. The soldiers and Navy Yard workers were ordered to stand by the rescue of the last body.

Captain Lord has been on duty with but two hours' sleep since the crash Saturday night.

BUILDER OF THEATER SILENT UPON TRAGEDY

In October, 1915, John I. Cassidy and George T. Smallwood applied for permission to build the Knickerbocker Theater. It was not until several years later the theater was completed, however.

In submitting their application, it was stated the theater was to be forty feet high in the rear; was to have a frontage of 137.24 feet on Eighteenth street and 157 feet on Columbia road.

The name of the architect was given as R. W. Gears and the builder, Frank L. Wagner. It was stated the theater was to cost \$500,000.

Brick, terra cotta, steel and concrete was used in the construction of the building, according to the permit issued. Neither the builder or the architect would make a statement today.

WINE CITIZENS DONATE STRENGTHENS INJURED

Home brew stocks of wine were brought from many homes in the vicinity of Columbia road and Eighteenth street during the long hours that rescue work went on in the death pit at the Knickerbocker Theater to be used by physicians in sustaining life in those who were comatose. He beneath the wreckage until they could be pulled out. The liquor was forced down the throats of the victims through rubber tubes. Physicians said today that many persons who otherwise would have perished, were saved in this manner. The wine might not have come strictly within the terms of the Volstead law.

POLICE BESIAGED BY OUT-OF-TOWN QUERIES

Police headquarters were besieged with hundreds of telephone calls today from all parts of the United States from people inquiring as to relatives and friends in the city.

These telegrams, it was stated, will be answered in each instance by the police, as soon as it can be definitely determined that the party inquired about is dead, injured, or not injured.

Second Inspection of Theaters Is On Today

The District Commissioners announced today that all theaters in Washington would be permitted to remain open provided snow has been cleaned from the roofs.

"Police captains have been instructed," said Daniel E. Gargies, secretary to the District Commissioners, "to visit every theater in Washington. If the theater has not taken all snow off the roof, it will be closed. If, however, snow has been removed and the captain feels that the building is safe, the theater will be permitted to open."

The entire force of building inspectors were sent out at 10 o'clock today. They will visit and inspect every theater.

ing inspectors, especially in relation to structures erected during and since the world war.

"Resolved, That the committee be authorized to employ such experts and other help as may in their judgment be needed to obtain all the facts connected with this disaster."

"Resolved, That the expenses of the investigation be defrayed from the contingent fund of the United States Senate."

Violation of Law Denounced.

After the Capper resolution had been read, Senator Frelinghuysen of New Jersey made a brief speech, in which he denounced the administration of the law in the District.

"I know of my own personal knowledge that the administration of the laws, both Government and District, that protect the lives and welfare of its people have not been properly enforced," Senator Frelinghuysen said.

"I believe a rigid investigation should be made of the entire administration of the District government. I demand as one of the property owners of the District that such an investigation be made."

"I know of my own personal knowledge that many buildings in the city are firetraps, and that if any of them caught fire the consequences probably would involve a great loss of life."

"I know of my own personal knowledge that the laxity in enforcing the traffic laws of the District is but another menace to the safety and welfare of the people of Washington."

"There are twice as many automobiles now as there used to be, and the way traffic is controlled by the District authorities is a daily and hourly menace to the pedestrians who take their lives in their hands when they cross our principal thoroughfares."

Real Investigation Demanded.

"For God's sake let there be a real investigation of the whole administration of the District Government and of the administration of the laws of the District, such as will prevent a repetition of the horrible disaster which has plunged the National Capital into mourning."

"The resolution proposed by the Senator from Kansas should be engaged so as to embrace a widespread investigation which should determine the laxity in law enforcement which we all know exists in Washington and which is a blot on the National Capital."

"There should be some kind of civic leadership in the District that would insure not only enforcement of the laws by those that govern it, but which would protect our people and see that they get a square deal from those that are charged with the enforcement of those laws."

Tabloid News of The Day

HOOVER BLAMES BUILDING.

Secretary of Commerce Hoover, in a conference with newspaper men today, expressed the belief that the cave-in of the roof of the Knickerbocker Theater was caused by "faulty construction." He said that this conclusion on his part was not the result of an investigation, but was made after carefully reading all published accounts of the disaster.

MAN DIES OF GAS POISONING.

C. L. Holbrook, seventy-nine years old, was found dead last night at his home, 1100 Thirteenth street northwest, with gas flowing from a heater.

TRAFFIC NEAR NORMAL.

Washington today drew a long sigh of relief as the snow melted appreciably. Street car traffic was resumed on the Seventh, Fourteenth, and F street lines and in Pennsylvania avenue.

HOLIDAY IN SCHOOLS.

Today was a holiday for Washington school children. Superintendent Ballou decided that the streets were too rough for the youngsters to venture outdoors.

TRAINS STILL UNCERTAIN.

While train service was slightly relieved this morning, hundreds of suburbanites employed in the city were unable to get transportation.

MURATORE HAS APPENDICITIS.

NEW YORK, Jan. 30.—Murtore, famous tenor of the Chicago Opera Company, will be operated on today for acute appendicitis.

ITALIAN CABLE FAVORED.

Italy has received assurances from the United States that this Government will support the Italian claim for an Atlantic cable from the Azores to New York, it was learned on high authority today. This move is expected to clear up the dispute over the former German owned cables.

To Cure a Cold in One Day
Take Laxative BROWN'S LAXATIVE
The more you get BROWN'S, the more you get BROWN'S.

MEMBERS OF THE KNICKERBOCKER ORCHESTRA

